

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Participants : Robert G. Kreer, Assistant Chief,  
Division of Communications  
William P. Richmond, Regional Telegraphic  
Communications Officer  
William Hussey, Chairman of the London  
Liaison Group  
John Coffee, Communications Assistant,  
London Embassy  
John Bacon, Communications Officer,  
London Embassy

Date : June 15, 1951

Classification : SECRET

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On the above date the indicated participants met to discuss the emergency communications requirements within the area of the responsibility assigned to the London Liaison Group. Mr. Kreer indicated that the Department had taken steps and was now in a position to proceed with the installation of radio transmitting and receiving equipment in Bern, Brussels, Copenhagen, Dublin, Helsinki, The Hague, Lisbon, Luxembourg, Madrid, Oslo, Paris and Stockholm and to assure the presence at each post of personnel competent to operate the equipment, to exercise traffic discipline and thus to meet emergency communications requirements in small volume and probably for a brief period after the outset of crisis. The equipment was indicated to be of small semi-portable nature which would either remain completely inactive until the existence of actual emergency or would be tested to the absolute minimum degree essential for the assurance of workability when required.

It was further indicated that there would be available within the United Kingdom a net control station with whom the post stations would establish contact when required. Except in periods of actual emergency, this station is manned only on a normal working day basis, roughly nine to five during which period it will be prepared to monitor guard frequencies and thus to establish contact at the posts' demands. During other hours there is at all times an assigned officer who can be reached by telephone and alerted to attend the station. Such attendance is considered to be assured within a maximum of two hours from the initial alert but normally to be possible in a much shorter time. Post stations would not monitor on any regular basis and in most cases probably not at all.

State Dept. review completed

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Teletype channels have been established between the London Embassy Communications Area and the base station, thus providing a reasonably facilitative channel for communications from any one of the posts mentioned to the London Liaison Group or to CTF-127 after station contact has been established.

The basis on which either the base station or any post station would be activated was discussed in some detail with the conclusions in general that it would follow the pattern already established for either the Liaison Group or any Chief of Mission to declare a condition of emergency in any of the respective phases. From a practical standpoint the base would be alerted upon advice from LLG or the Chief of Mission at London through the Embassy communications office. Any station on the continent desiring to establish communications during the hours in which the base station is not manned would have to transmit the alert by the best means available to it, the obvious preference being for established commercial communications. This would, of course, work practically the same in reverse should the base find it necessary to establish contact with any of the posts. It was in fact, however, accepted on the basis that no transmissions would take place if any other means of communication were available. This of course would not preclude attending the receivers on the prescribed frequencies in anticipation of disruption of such commercial facilities.

In addition, it was established as understood that upon the activation of any station in a situation of emergency the covert nature would disappear and plaindress procedures would obtain. These two points should be included in the basic instructions for the establishment of these facilities.

Mr. Hussey was informed that facilities in the form of equipment actually existed at The Hague, Brussels and Paris although operating personnel was available only at Paris, the presumption being that they could be gotten into The Hague and Brussels on short notice if required. It was further agreed that the rather comprehensive installation at Paris including a BC-610 with good antenna should be provided with signal plan and crystals to permit contact with the base and with the stations available to the Department at Washington. This should be done as soon as practical.

It was made clear that while the communications equipment could probably be supplied for these installations in the relatively near future, the assignment of personnel would have to be contingent upon recruitment and training considerations and urgent demands in other areas. No estimate was established as to completion of the entire network, it being considered that it would be established by degrees as the people became available.

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The second phase of the discussions related to the necessity for assurance of communications between the USEPLOS at evacuation ports and a suitable base station in or near London.

Various types of equipment were discussed and it was concluded that the Mackay type 212 radio telephone sets would be more suitable.

The ports presently involved are Bergen, Norway, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, Zeebrugge, Belgium, Le Havre and Cherbourg, France. The base station with whom these ports would operate would preferably not be the same base as employed for the above CW network. It should preferably be in the Grosvenor Square area with further preference for the Navy Headquarters if local noise conditions permit.

Consulates presumably suitable for the accommodation of such apparatus are understood to be available at Bergen, Rotterdam, Le Havre and Cherbourg. The equipment for Zeebrugge could be stored at the Embassy in Brussels, approximately 30 miles distant, or, preferably, some arrangement might be made to install it without fanfare in the offices of the United States Line wherein some emergency gear is already stored. This would require some detailed consideration.

There are possible alternatives to the inclusion of Cherbourg in the existence of communications equipment at the cablehead not far distant and in other channels understood to be available. The Regional Telegraphic Communications Officer will investigate the practicability of utilizing these facilities before a decision is made to include that port. The Department will be requested to determine whether this equipment can be made available.

It was the expressed opinion of the Chairman of the London Liaison Group that the provision of these two networks would meet the minimum requirements for emergency communications in the area not otherwise provided for.

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